

Designing ESP Tasks with Web series for Medical English in TBLT Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to focus on the pedagogical deployment of medical-themed web series through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) framework, to aid the formation of medical English competence. Grounded in different theoretical frameworks and learning perspectives, this article proposes a systematic yet practical approach to designing TBLT tasks with complementary authentic audio-visual input to enhance linguistic competences for specific medical purposes in professional contexts. The proposed framework emphasizes the importance of developing higher-order language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing and critical thinking and professional expressions. The research suggests how web series can serve as a pedagogical method for enabling language acquisition and learning in the context of medical education, in an immersive and contextualized manner. The paper provides sample tasks aligned with key medical communication skills, including patient interactions, diagnostic discussions, and emergency protocols. The increasing demand for specialized language skills in the realm of medicine and its subsequent advantages have led to a need for incorporating web series in ESP curricula, which will enhance engagement, encouraging interactive and effective learning experience.

Keywords: *Web Series (WS), English for Specific Purposes, Medical English, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Pedagogical.*

Introduction

ESP was previously focused on technical terms and discourse structures in a particular professional environment, traditionally grounded in textbook learning. Progress in education

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technology, such as interactive learning platforms, has opened new avenues for ESP, providing more interactive and responsive education to suit various learner needs (Sakti et al., 2024). Utilizing Web Series in ESP tasks can provide real, context-embedded materials responsive to the values of TBLT, emphasizing real-life language use and communicative problem-solving (Silva et al., 2024).

The field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in medicine is a specialized branch of language education that aims to provide medical learners and professionals with the English language the communication skills they will use in their work. Given that the medical job market is more international in nature, with English being the lingua franca for medical academics and communication, the role of ESP in medical education further solidifies its importance.

Medical ESP courses are designed to provide these professionals with the skills they require, both in terms of their profession and the language. These courses cover specialized terminology, the methods of medical communication, and the ability to read medical literature, all of which are essential for successful communication, academic performance, and career development (Melnychuk & Artemenko, 2025).

Second, since ESP is different from general-purpose English, ESP courses are designed and implemented to serve specific contexts and learners. As an instance, in the context of a Yemeni university, the results confirm that the actual perception of the learners and the lecturers were different concerning the entry-level language English skills needed in the medical learners, and it shows that Listening and Reading are the priority skills for learners however their lecturers priority skills are Writing and Listening respectively (Farea & Singh, 2024).

For medical and science learners, the importance of ESP courses has been strengthened in Saudi Arabia, as medical textbooks and journals are mostly in English. In this context, the challenges faced in teaching ESP encompass addressing English proficiency levels-differently among learners in addition to the demand for courses tailored to the ever-toughening demands of the medical field (Khan, 2020). Medical Internationalization refers to the global establishment of the medical ability of hospitals, doctors, nurses and other health professionals to carry out foreign medical services (Lu, 2023).

Use of andragogical principles (i.e., self-directedness, previous experience and introduction of innovative ESP course design, in blended learning models can improve the learning outcomes in medical learners. Such models enable multimodal tools helping learners learn the English

language and build medical vocabularies to facilitate English language competence, cognitive competence and academic motivation (Alvi, 2023).

In general, designing ESP classes for medical learners is essential, as it provides them with the linguistic and professional readiness required to excel in their field. Here we present four key reasons why ESP continues to be a cornerstone of English language programs for medical learners: ESP courses greatly increase learners' competency in English, the language of communication in the global medical community, thereby making them better physicians and medical practitioners.

Web Series provide contextualized language as found in real-life situations that would be used in creating tasks that match live situations, offering relevance and intensity to ESP language teaching (Silva et al., 2024). They possess varied linguistic inputs and cultural backgrounds, which can be tailored into a particular vocation, hence enriching the ESP course (Amelia, 2019). Incorporating Web Series in TBLT classrooms can fill the gap between ESP traditional methodologies and the needs of contemporary learning through the provision of interactive, multimedia content that facilitates interactive learning (Sakti et al., 2024).

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) Approach

Starting in the 1970s, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has become popular among researchers and facilitators of foreign and foreign language acquisition. During the 1980s, “task” replaced the term “communicative activity.” “Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has become a new teaching method widely applied in language classrooms (Hasan, 2014). The concept of “task” is central to task-based language teaching, which distinguishes between actual or target tasks and instructional tasks. Target tasks refer to language use in the outside world beyond the classrooms, while instructional tasks take place within the classrooms (Nunan, 2004).

1. TBLT focuses on tasks that accomplish communicative purposes, rather than just individual (or linguistic) features such as vocabulary, grammar, or pronunciation (Silva et al., 2024).
2. TBLT paradigm states that Web Series-based tasks might lead to real communication and problem solving (Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2024).
3. Incorporating Web Series into tasks can meet the need for authenticity in language learning since it enables learners to come into contact with language in a natural manner (Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2024).

By incorporating Web Series into L2 TBLT classrooms, facilitator can design task cycles that reflect real-world professional and academic environments, thereby improving learners' language proficiency (Ellis, 2003). This integration provides an opportunity to address specific language needs and fosters an environment in which learners can practice language in contexts that closely match their professional or academic world (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Utilizing Web Series is an earnest and participative way of fulfilling learners' demands, encouraging more engagement with language and its usage (Cunningham, 2014).

The study also provides a model for integrating Web Series into ESP L2 TBLT courses to enable the design of appropriate task-based cycles that are ESP-focused. This not only raises language competence but also enables the learning of skills required to execute specific professional and academic tasks (Basturkmen, 2010). The study is thus a one-stop manual to designing and implementing ESP courses to L2 TBLT courses utilizing Web Series as a potent pedagogical tool for meaningful, context-rich, and interactive language learning experiences.

Review of Literature

A Web Series is a series of episodic material published over the internet. Web Series can be of any type, such as drama, comedy, or reality TV, and produced by independent producers or large production houses. The origins of the Web Series go back to the late 1990s and early 2000s when the Internet began to become popular and user-friendly. Early Web Series were generally low-cost productions produced independently and published by individuals or small production houses (Honmode, 2019). Early Web Series were generally short-form and published on sites like YouTube and other video sites. With improvement in the technology and the internet, Web Series began gaining prominence and wider acceptability.

Web Series were produced and distributed by streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Hulu during the early 2000s. This has impacted the value and production quality of Web Series and has pushed them to be marketed to the masses. The Web Series allows audiences to be exposed to the new phenomenon of “anywhere, anytime,” where audiences view and participate in programs seamlessly and through personal media. Web Series are pushing digital media providers to create new content. The growth of internet access in rural and urban communities has played a major role in improving viewership of Web Series on digital media (Meshram & Mohammad, 2023).

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a subdivision of English language teaching (ELT) that seeks to address the particular communicative and linguistic requirements of learners' in

particular professional or academic environments. ESP is designed to the contextual and functional language requirements of learners, thus an extremely pragmatic language teaching methodology (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

ESP was created because of the growing demand for English language proficiency in business, medicine, law and engineering (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998). The core concept of ESP is learner-centeredness which is based on applied use of language in real contexts. Four key features of ESP were identified by Strevens (1988); it is made to meet the needs of specific learners, it is discipline-specific, it is specific in terms of language registers and its methodology is different from general English.

The integration of technology in ESP has considerably improved the language instruction by offering authentic materials, interactive learning experiences and access to specialized sources (Chapelle, 2001). The use of Web Series in ESP teaching is supported by task-based language teaching (TBLT), which emphasizes the role of meaningful tasks in language acquisition (Ellis, 2003). Multimedia, including web series and podcasts, have been found to be appropriate media for the acquisition of specialized language skills (Basturkmen, 2010).

Designing English for Specific Purposes (ESP) L2 Tasks Based on Web Series (WS) For Language Skills

Selecting an ESP context suitable for Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) classrooms involves investigating learners' work or study-related needs and planning instruction onto authentic language use in their own specialized field of specialization. The most important considerations in selecting an appropriate ESP context are learners' levels of proficiency, vocational or academic goals, and communicative tasks they are most likely to perform in real life (Hyland, 2006). Business English learners, for example, can be supported by Web Series on business negotiations, and medical professionals can view medical drama to observe interactions with patients and specialist vocabulary in action. Facilitators must conduct careful needs analysis in order to select the most suitable Web Series content and task structures to facilitate practical language development in specialized contexts (Long, 2005). Blending TBLT with customized ESP contexts enables facilitators to create productive and engaging language learning experiences in bridging the gap between class instruction and communication needs.

Selection of Web Series from OTT for L2 ESP Context

Choosing web series from Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms to practice Medical English within English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an innovative and effective method of language learning in healthcare environments. As the popularity of OTT platforms continues to rise, there is tremendous scope to use such interactive content in improving medical English proficiency for healthcare providers. Not only does this provide access to real-life medical situations, but it also promotes better communication with clinical professionals in the field, ensuring this innovation is a step forward in terms of language education. Web series can be incorporated into Medical English material as it exposes the learners to several relevant themes, vocabulary, and communication styles in an adaptable and accessible way. Watching content that depicts real-life interactions between healthcare providers and patients allows learners to find opportunities to listen and speak with people from different backgrounds and to improve their listening and speaking skills in an interactive manner that addresses various accents and cultural specificity in clinical communication. Formal language classes are often focused on a limited vocabulary and focused on rote learning, limiting clinical learners from being well-prepared for the clinical atmosphere where learning takes place mostly through patient-provider interactions. Some important web series that can be used are *Chicago Med*, *the Good Doctor*, and *Grey's Anatomy*, as these series reveal a lot of information about medical practices and terms, which are important for basic learning in this field. But the process of choosing the right web series is an exercise in specifics: what was the content really, how authentic was it, was it engaging, and did it cross any culture gaps. As such, educators need to ensure that the series they choose accurately depict medical environments and enhance the learning experience, while also being mindful of the different backgrounds from which learners come. Not only does cognitive load and diversity in culture and narrative usage lead to learning challenges, but melodrama in particular poses the challenge of misrepresentation of medical issues.

Task Design of L2 with Web Series for ESP Environment

An ESP L2 task with Web Series that is well-designed is a well-structured process consisting of needs analysis, pre-tasks, task performance, and reflection post-task. Pre-tasks introduce initial vocabulary, concepts, and background information about the content of the Web Series so that learners can work more effectively with the material while performing the task, learners watch Web Series episodes with supported tasks involving identification of technical vocabulary, analysis of professional language, and practice of communicative functions

specific to their profession (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003). Post-tasks reinforce learning through discussion, role-play, and written reflection, fostering domain-specific language acquisition. The pedagogical benefits of employing Web Series in ESP courses are enormous. Web Series provide authentic inputs representative of the communication patterns of different professions and therefore bridge the gap between instructional inputs in the classroom and real-world applications (Gavioli, 2005).

Integration of WS-ESP Tasks in L2 TBLT Classrooms

While the inclusion of Web Series in ESP tasks has several advantages, it is essential to look into possible disadvantageous elements like differences in the understanding of tasks and the requirement of digital literacy among learners and facilitators. Moreover, the authenticity principle might be differently interpreted by adult learners and child learners of language, which requires a responsive task design approach to accommodate different learner needs and contexts (Timpe-Laughlin et al., 2024).

Web Series assignments in ESP classes demand careful planning and instructional approaches to maximize learning outcomes. Facilitators have to adopt a step-by-step procedure, beginning with an introduction to the context of the Web Series and characters, followed by guided vision and interactive discussion. The use of the classrooms should stimulate learners to study actual professional communication, to recognize professional jargon and to rehearse communication techniques specific to their profession (Gatehouse, 2001). Cooperative tasks like group discussion, debates and presentations based on Web Series situations can enhance the engagement of learners and facilitate communicative competence (Ellis, 2003). Instructional materials supported by technology, such as online discussion output areas and interactive language drills, can also reinforce the incorporation of Web Series ESP exercises into L2 classrooms.

Involving L2 Learners in WS-ESP Task Cycles

Engagement is a success determinant for WS-ESP task cycles. In order to ensure learner motivation and engagement, tasks must be interactive, goal-based, and contextually applicable. Scaffolding strategies like guided discussions, peer collaboration, and reflective journals can facilitate learners to navigate complicated dialogues and jargon. Gamification features like role-playing Web Series situations, language quizzes, and case studies based on Web Series content can support learner engagement. Enabling learners to individualize learning by

choosing Web Series characters or episodes related to their professional field of interest can enhance intrinsic motivation and promote richer language learning.

Feedback and Adaptability

Web Series also provides a possibility for feedback continuously and keeping the process of teaching flexible. Educators can evaluate student understanding of native content through discussions and contemplations on episodes, so the curriculum can be adjusted to address learners' changing needs and industry direction. Adaptive learning becomes essential, as the medical industry is constantly developing, and the learners need to keep up with the latest practices and terminologies or jargons.

Sample L2 ESP Tasks with Web Series

1. Doctor-Patient Consultation Task

Web Series Clip: *The Good Doctor*, Season 1, Episode 2 – **Dr. Murphy takes a patient's history**

Task Phases:

1. Pre-task:

- a. Talk about common phrases in doctor-patient interactions (e.g., “What brings you in today?” (“How long have you had these symptoms?”).
- b. Vocabulary Highlight: Health issues, symptoms, polite questioning.

2. During-task:

- a. Watch the clip and fill in a listening worksheet (filling in missing words, writing down key phrases).
- b. Action: Learners role-play doctors and patients and re-create the dialogue with variations.

3. Post-task:

- a. Consider the clarity and professionalism of communication.
- b. Evaluate your capabilities to understand at what extent you are able to comprehend.

2. Emergency Response Communication Task

Web Series Clip: *Grey's Anatomy*, Season 14, Episode 3 – **ER trauma team handles a critical patient**

Task Phases:

1. Pre-task:

- a. Brainstorm emergency scenarios and discuss key emergency communication phrases:
 - i. “Check vital signs.”
 - ii. “Start CPR.”
 - iii. “Call for a crash cart.”

2. During-task:

- a. View the scene and analyze communication strategies in high-pressure situations.
- b. Team activity: Develop a verbal response plan for an emergency event (e.g., hospital cardiac arrest).

3. Post-task:

- a. At this point, you could also ask learners to compare their responses to the web series scene.
- b. Suggestions for improving clarity, accuracy, tone, and professionalism.

3. Case Presentation and Medical Report Task

Web Series Clip: *House M.D.*, Season 5, Episode 4 – **Dr. House presents an unusual patient case to his team**

Task Phases:

1. Pre-task:

- a. Examples: 1. The framework we use for medical case presentations (Patient → Symptoms → Diagnosis → Treatment) 2. The structure of medical case presentations.
- b. Add phrases for medical reporting (e.g., “The patient presents with...”, “Differential diagnosis includes...”).

2. During-task:

- a. Watch the clip, taking structured notes on patient information, symptoms and diagnosis.
- b. Learners prepare a case presentation according to a patient scenario.

3. Post-task:

- a. Review the paragraphs for clarity, accuracy and completeness.
- b. The above presentation structure is just an overall template, but it to be considered and revised based on the feedback.

4. Breaking Bad News Task

Web Series Clip: *New Amsterdam*, Season 1, Episode 5 – **Dr. Goodwin delivers bad news to a patient’s family**

Task Phases:

1. Pre-task:

- a. Discuss the **SPIKES model** for delivering bad news:
 - i. **Setting:** Ensuring privacy and comfort.
 - ii. **Perception:** Understanding the patient’s knowledge.
 - iii. **Invitation:** Allowing the patient to express concerns.
 - iv. **Knowledge:** Delivering the news clearly.
 - v. **Empathy:** Responding sensitively.
 - vi. **Strategy:** Discussing next steps.
- b. Review **softening phrases**:
 - i. “I have some difficult news, I’m afraid.”
 - ii. “We have done all we can.”

2. During-task:

- a. Watch the scene and then analyse the doctor’s communication strategy.
- b. Role-play Learners practice delivering bad news in pairs using the SPIKES methodology.

3. Post-task:

- a. Consider the emotional force and fragment of voice.
- b. Talk about cultural differences in the way bad news is delivered.

5. Informed Consent Discussion Task

Web Series Clip: *The Resident*, Season 3, Episode 7 – **A doctor explains a risky procedure to a patient**

Task Phases:

1. Pre-task:

- a. Explain the role that informed consent plays in a legal and ethical sense.
- b. Vocabulary focus: “Risks,” “benefits,” “alternative treatments,” “side effects.”

2. During-task:

- a. Watch the clip and then analyse how the physician then communicates medical risks clearly.

- b. Pair work: Learners practice obtaining informed consent from a patient.

3. Post-task:

- a. Peer review on **clarity and patient-friendliness**.
- b. Revise explanations using **simpler, non-technical language**.

Conclusion

The significance of learning English for specific purposes (ESP) lies in the fact that ESP develops the language ability for experts to communicate effectively within their sector, like in health care where careful use of language is an obligatory consideration to ensure patient safety and inter-professional collaboration. In this regard, the clinical interaction, case presentation or the emergency communication works in medical English is a reflection of task based, context driven teaching and learning.

Research also shows that the approach to these ESP programs is through needs analysis, task-based learning and the integration of technology. Though experienced verbal feedback in online or blended TBLT in serious games, web series, or simulations with multimodal input has limited literature, authentic environmental scenarios exposure significantly benefits medical English in professional communication skills.

Future research in medical English teaching may focus on exploring AI-assisted learning, the ability to interact with virtual patients, and immersive technologies to further performance enhance medical learners in utilizing English language. The development of ESP programs can help the health workers learn the language and communication skills they need to practice and improve the quality of patient care.

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